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stated." These sentences, chosen at random, furnish a fair sample of the prevailing style of the book.

As a digest of the law on Mechanic's Liens, as it existed at the time of writing, the work is of great value. Its arrangement is excellent, its treatment exhaustive, and typographically it is perfect.

R. W.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

By SYDNEY GEORGE FISHER. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1897.

The above volume, as the author states, is devoted to the exposition of our Constitution as a development of progressive history, and not an isolated document struck off at a given time or an imitation of English or Dutch forms of Government.

Mr. Fisher shows, in a very interesting and convincing way, that the different provisions of the constitutions are the direct result of the experience of the people of the Colonies in attempting to govern themselves. For this purpose he traces the forms of government from the original trading corporations with their extremely simple machinery, to the developed and comparatively perfect colonial constitutions of 1776. The author shows how every provision of importance in the national constitution was foreshadowed in some of the earlier documents, and was given a practical test by the colonies. He shows, further, that these provisions were not copies of the expedients of other foreign governments but were worked out independently and to meet given needs as they arose. He thinks that, in a majority of the instances, where our institutions are similar to those of England the similarity is a coincidence and not an imitation. The book is scholarly, thoughtful and convincing, and may serve to unsettle some of the accepted canons of constitutional interpretation. It shows a vast amount of investigation and study of a literature which is in itself none too attractive, and a careful comparison and summary of it for the benefit of those who have neither the time nor the facilities for consulting it. *O. J. R.*